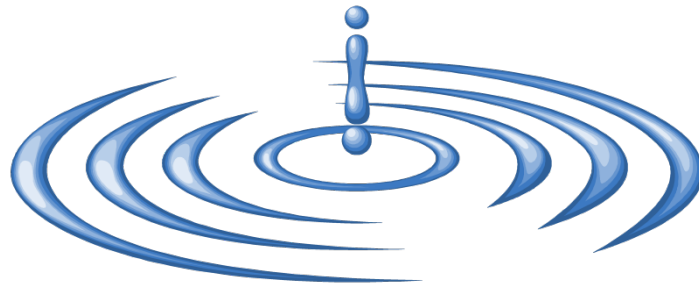


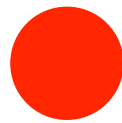
The Serendipity Centre



Every child deserves a chance

*The past is something that's gone forever
The future is something we will work on together*

SAFEGUARDING POLICY



September
2015

distribution

UNRESTRICTED

Scope

This document contains the Safeguarding Policy of The Serendipity Centre Ltd (TSCL). The policy is in line with the procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board [RD8] and applies to any, and all, adults working for TSCL. This policy has been approved and endorsed by TSCL's director.

Introduction

TSCL fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding. Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. The Children's Act 1989 state that the welfare of children and young people is paramount. This includes their right to be safeguarded against all forms of abuse, including sexual exploitation. All staff should be alert to indications of possible child abuse and understand procedures to be taken to raise concerns.

At TSCL it must be recognised that due to the difficulties and traumas experienced by many of our girls safeguarding is a key priority and of paramount importance at TSCL. The core of our ethos is a "whole team" approach and as a result, safeguarding and welfare of our girls is embedded in our culture and daily lives. Our pro-active approach creates a caring, friendly and safe environment; both the girls and the staff team are supported by the safeguarding team lead by our Head of Safeguarding.

The use of skilled and highly-consistent behaviour management by the whole team helps create a culture of care, learning and keeping safe. Linked to this is an open and transparent forum for discussing the needs of our girls and a multi-disciplinary approach to the support of their individual needs [RD1].

To achieve this we will:

- ensure safe recruitment practices are followed that involve checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with our young people.
- raise awareness of safeguarding issues and equip young people with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- develop, implement and continually review procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- support our young people who have been abused in accordance with their agreed child protection plan.
- establish a safe environment in which our young people can learn and develop.

Applicable Documents

When reading this document, please be aware of the following related documents.

- [AD1] The Children Act 2004 MSO (2004). TSO, London
- [AD2] The Sexual Offences Act, 2003
HMSO (2003). TSO, London
- [AD3] Keeping Children Safe in Education (2015) Ref: DFE-00129-2015
- [AD4] Safeguarding Children 2008: The Joint Chief Inspectors' Report on Arrangements to Safeguard Children
- [AD5] Working Together to Safeguard Children
HM Government (2015) DFE-00130-2015
- [AD6] Guidance for Safer Working Practices for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings
DCFS (2009) DfES, Annesley
- [AD1] The Children's Homes Regulations (2015)
- [AD7] Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation (DCSF 00689-2009)

References

- [RD1] General Principles
The Serendipity Centre Ltd
- [RD2] Safeguarding Cause for Concern Form
The Serendipity Centre Ltd
- [RD3] Allegations against Staff
The Serendipity Centre Ltd
- [RD4] Discipline Policy
The Serendipity Centre Ltd
- [RD5] Behaviour Management Policy
The Serendipity Centre Ltd
- [RD6] Recruitment Policy
The Serendipity Centre Ltd
- [RD7] Public Interest Disclosure (Whistle blowing) Policy
The Serendipity Centre Ltd
- [RD8] Safeguarding Children Procedures
4LSCB (June 2014)
- [RD9] Anti-Bullying Policy
The Serendipity Centre Ltd
- [RD10] Information Sharing and Security Policy
The Serendipity Centre Ltd

Abbreviations and Acronyms

Abbreviation or Acronym	Description
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children Board
AD	Applicable Document
HoS	Head of Safeguarding
SgCT	Safeguarding Core Team
DoE	Department of Education
DoH	Department of Health
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
RD	Reference Document
DO	Designated Officer

Responsibilities

The TSCL Director will:

- ensure that there is a designated Safeguarding Core Team lead by having a Head of Safeguarding who has received appropriate training and support for this role.
- in co-operation with the HoS and the safeguarding team, ensure that the TSCL has a Safeguarding policy and that TSCL procedures are consistent with LSCB procedures.
- ensure that any adult who works for TSCL knows the name of the HoS .
- ensure that company policies are implemented and are known and followed by staff.
- ensure that there are sufficient resources to enable the HoS to carry out their duties responsible .
- ensure that staff are able to raise any concerns about poor or unsafe practices.
- liaise with the HoS over safeguarding allegations (with due regard to issues of confidentiality).
- ensure that recruitment procedures are followed as set out in the *Recruitment Policy* [RD6].

Safeguarding Officer

Within TSCL we have a Safeguarding Core Team (SgCT) which includes a Head and Deputy of Safeguarding. The HoS is the 'designated person' with specific responsibility for co-ordinating action within TSCL and for liaising with Social Care departments and other agencies over suspected child abuse. The HoS can be contacted from an external phone 02380 422255 or internally **6102** or directly on her mobile **07881 883 035**. The main responsibilities for the HoS are:

- to refer suspected cases of abuse to the appropriate authorities.
- to ensure that all staff have training to recognise and identify signs of abuse, and when it is appropriate to make a referral, and to understand how child protection procedures operate.
- to raise awareness of child safety issues across the company.
- to ensure that the company has an up-to-date Safeguarding Policy in co-operation with the director.
- to ensure that the Director and parents, carers are kept informed (unless themselves the subject of an allegation of abuse).
- to co-operate with the Designated Officer, Ofsted Social Care Departments and the Police in relation to any allegations of child abuse made against any staff member including the Director, including possible involvement in multi-agency strategy discussions.

Staff

All staff are expected to play a part in maintaining a safe environment and in the prevention of abuse. A crucial role for staff is to help our young people understand what is unacceptable behaviour towards them, and to speak out if they are worried. Once they do, they must be listened to, and their concerns passed **immediately** on to the HoS or a member of the SgCT. Staff should be aware that failure to report actual or reasonably

suspected physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect of a child will result in the disciplinary procedures being invoked.

All staff (including agency staff) have a **duty** to report to the appropriate body any concerns they may have about practices, or the behaviour of any colleague, which they consider likely to put children at risk of abuse or other serious harm. Should this occur out-of-hours, they should follow the Out-Of-Hours protocol.

Staff reporting an allegation or concern in good faith are guaranteed protection of their own position and prospects under the company's *Whistleblowing Policy* [RD7]

Parents and Carers

Parents/carers/professionals are provided with, and encouraged to read our Safeguarding Policy. This document is made available as part of our admission pack and is also available on our website www.serendipity-education.com.

Parents carers, or anyone who comes in contact with TSCL who may have a concern about any care offered by TSCL, and who do not feel that they can talk to anyone within the company, can either contact the Local Safeguarding Children Board (see above) or Ofsted with their concerns. Ofsted can be contacted on 0300 123 1231, or at enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Definitions and Recognition of Abuse

Abuse may be defined as follows.

- abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons and may be perpetrated by adults or children.
- Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts.
- The abuse can be physical, emotional, sexual, psychological, financial or neglect
- Abuse can be seen as an act of negligence or omission to act and maybe the unintended consequences of a person's actions
- Abuse can and may occur when a person is persuaded to enter into financial or sexual transactions to which they have not consented or cannot consent to.

Abuse may take the following forms.

Physical abuse - includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, undue restraint or inappropriate sanctions.

Sexual Abuse - includes rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the person has not or could not consent and/or was pressured into consenting. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of sexual abuse. It is the coercion or manipulation of children and young people into taking part in sexual activities, usually involving an exchange of some form, which can include money, mobile phones and other items, such as drugs, alcohol, a place to stay, protection or affection. The vulnerability of the young person and grooming process employed by perpetrators renders them powerless to recognise the exploitive nature of relationships and unable to give informed consent. CSE is a particularly hidden form of abuse and recent evidence indicates that children who are, or have been in care, are more vulnerable. Disclosure of this form of abuse is rare. Vulnerability and risk indicators of CSE are well established and it is possible to evidence risks.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): Staff need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. There are a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM: individually these indicators may not signify risk but if there are two or more indicators present there could be a possible risk to the child or young person. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject. Where a concern relating to possible FGM is identified staff should follow TSCL safeguarding protocol

Psychological Abuse - includes threats of harm, abandonment, humiliations, verbal or racial abuse, isolation, withdrawal from services or supportive networks. It also includes radicalisation and any other forms of exploitation.

Financial or Material Abuse - includes theft, fraud, pressure around wills, property or inheritance, misuse or misappropriation of benefits.

Neglect and Acts of Omission - includes failure to access medical care or services, negligence in the face of risk taking, failure to give prescribed medication, poor nutrition or lack of heating.

Other types of abuse include hate crime which is targeting a person's difference and Mate Crime where victims consider their perpetrators to be their friends. Some abuse is considered a criminal offence i.e. some extremes of physical abuse, financial abuse, sexual abuse and wilful neglect and ill treatment.

Signs of Abuse

The effective recognition of signs and symptoms of abuse requires staff to be vigilant and open to both the possibility and occurrence of non-accidental injury or other forms of abuse. It also depends upon staff understanding and discharging their duty to report any safeguarding concerns they may have to SgCT.

The following list, although not exclusive or exhaustive, describes many of the signs and symptoms that may indicate the presence of abuse.

Type of abuse	Examples	Possible signs and symptoms
Physical Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hitting • Slapping • Pushing • Kicking • Misuse of medication • Unnecessary Restraint 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fractures • Sprains • Dislocations • Lacerations • Scalds/burns • Pressure sores • Bruising • Malnutrition • Unexplained injuries • Signs of medication misuse (over or under) • Untreated medical problems

The Serendipity Centre

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incontinence • Self-harm
Sexual Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the person has not consented to, or could not consent to, or was pressured into consenting to • Inappropriate touch • Child sexual exploitation (illegal activity by people who have power over young people and use it to sexually abuse them). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pain, itching, bleeding or bruising in the genital area • Difficulty in walking or sitting • Torn or stained clothing • Venereal disease • Changes in behaviour • Sexualised behaviour • Pregnancy • Young person having multiple mobile phones • Unexplained gifts, or cigarettes • Seemingly “consensual” relationships • Secret use of mobiles and the internet
Emotional or Psychological Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullying, including cyber bullying (the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others) • Threats of harm or abandonment • Deprivation of contact, isolation or withdrawal from services or support networks • Humiliation, blaming, controlling • Intimidation, coercion • Harassment, verbal abuse • Critical and undermining comments • Intrusive and inappropriate comments and questions • Offensive language or behaviour that is directed at a person because of disability, ethnic origin, race, skin colour, culture, sexual orientation, size, gender or age • Any other form of harassment, slurs or similar treatment • Radicalisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear • Depression • Withdrawal • Passivity • Confusion • Low self-esteem • Deference • Aggression • Resignation • Ambivalence • Disturbed sleep pattern • Weight loss • Running away • Self-harm • Imitative behaviour • A change in behaviour or appearance • Use of extremist language or expression of extremist views

The Serendipity Centre

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A change in clothing • Questioning of their identity and belonging • Accessing websites which promote extremism • Being mindful of existing
Financial Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theft • Fraud • Exploitation • Pressure in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions • The misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate money to pay bills • Disappearing benefit payments • Sudden or large withdrawal from bank account • Inadequate clothing • Lack of personal belongings • Poor standard of possessions
Neglect and Acts of Omission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ignoring medical or physical care needs • Failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services • The withholding of the necessities of life such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dehydration • Malnutrition • Unexplained failure to respond to prescribed medication • Infections • Pressure sores • Inadequate clothing • Hypothermia

Safeguarding Measures

TSCL recognises that because of the day to day contact with children, staff are best placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. We will therefore

- establish and maintain an environment where our young people feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to
- ensure our young people know that there are adults around whom they can approach if they are worried
- include opportunities in the curriculum and residential support plans for our young people to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse
- promote all girls to have a voice in house meetings and the use of worry/complaint forms.

TSCL will follow the guidance issued by the DFE and DoH and:

- notify Social Care if there is an unexplained absence from school of more than two days of a young person who is on the safeguarding register
- develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding safeguarding matters including attendance at case conferences
- keep written records of incidents and concerns about children using the *Safeguarding Cause for Concern Form*, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately. The actions taken by staff in response to the incident or

concern will also be recorded on this form and all safeguarding paperwork will be logged in bound books

- ensure that, in interviews,
 - confidentiality is not assured to a young person giving evidence
 - the interviewer will take care not to ask leading questions
- ensure all evidence is clearly and carefully documented
- ensure all records are kept securely, separate from the young person's main file, and in locked locations
- ensure that the LSCB is informed of any disclosure or suspicion of abuse within 24 hours
- where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer, follow the procedures set out in *Allegations against Staff* [RD3] in line with the 4LSCB procedure: *Managing Allegations Against People who Work with Children Procedure*
- where an allegation is made against a young person, by another young person, we will refer the matter to Social Care and the Local LSCB to how to proceed, in line with the 4LSCB procedure; *Abuse by Children and Young People Procedure*
- ensure that Ofsted is informed of any allegation of abuse on the premises (substantiated or not) without delay
- ensure that the relevant authority is notified of any allegation or suspicion of abuse involving any child placed by that authority within any of the companies establishments, without delay
- report to the Social Care and Police any evidence known of children becoming involved in sexual exploitation, or of unauthorised persons picking children up, contacting children, or observed trying to make contact with children outside
- ensure that safe recruitment practices are always followed as set out in the *Recruitment Policy* [RD6] including performing DBS checks on all persons in regular contact with young people
- report to the Disclosure and Barring Service, within one month of leaving employment with TSCL, any person whose services are no longer used because they are considered unsuitable to work with young people
- the HoS will undergo safeguarding training to level 3 at least every two years and all staff will be trained every three years to at least level 2.

Where there is a **serious** and **immediate** threat to a young person, staff will:

- seek to ensure the young person's safety, without endangering themselves
- assess the situation and, where someone is at severe risk of harm, contact the emergency services by dialling 999
- speak with the SgCT within 2 hours
- seek to ensure the child has no contact with the alleged abuser. It may be necessary to inform staff on what they need to do to keep the children safe. Detailed information does not need to be shared, but staff will be informed of everything they to know to ensure the young people are kept safe
- if a staff member has, for some reason, an honestly held belief that the matter will not be dealt effectively with, they may contact the local authority themselves.

Support for Our Young People

TSCL staff recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation, shame and some

sense of blame. We may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When staying with us their behaviour may be challenging and defiant and/or they may be withdrawn. We will endeavour to support our young people by:

- developing an ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment which gives our young people a sense of self-worth
- developing a interdepartmental and multi-agency approach which includes weekly safeguarding meetings with house managers, weekly safeguarding meetings with the head teacher, weekly MDT meetings and network meetings
- the content and arrangement of the activities / curriculum in school setting (if necessary, by providing on a one-to-one basis)
- liaising with other agencies that support young people such as Social Care, the Child and Adult Mental Health Service, the Education Welfare Service and the Educational Psychology Service
- offering additional support in addition to any that may be provided by the above services
- ensuring that, when a young person on the child protection plan leaves, their information is transferred to the new placement immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.

Managing Disclosures

Disclosure from a young person

- Listen to the young person
- Do not promise confidentiality
- Advise the young person what happens next
- Never ask leading questions, Who, What, Where, When; use reflective listening
- Do not say words for them, however embarrassed they are to say them
- Report any allegations to the Head of Safeguarding immediately in the event of her absence consult a member of the Safeguarding Core Team, Director, Head Teacher, or Home Manager.
- Record:
 - all details
 - all details and times of conversation and telephone calls
 - fill in a cause for concern form
 - log the cause for concern in cause for concern log book.
 - complete the safeguarding bound book

Disclosure from a staff member

A staff member may disclose a concern to a manager. Where this is a concern involving a risk of harm to any young person, the manager must follow the safeguarding procedures. Senior staff should be conscious of the *Whistleblowing Policy* [RD7] in such circumstances.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

All staff employed by TSCL are expected to observe the principles of confidentiality and adhere to the *Information Sharing and Security Policy* [RD10]. However, the safeguarding

needs and wellbeing of children at risk take precedence over issues of confidentiality; therefore all concerns, even if they constitute an apparent breach of confidentiality, should be reported to the SgCT.

Similarly, TSCL reserves the right, where appropriate, to inform outside agencies when permission to do so has not been given by a member of staff, young person, parent, carer or social worker.

Once a safeguarding procedure has been initiated, information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis but common sense should prevail. Not every member of staff needs to know the details of what the concern is, but all those directly involved with the young person should know what is going on and should be kept appropriately informed by the safeguarding team. In particular all staff involved with the young person should be made aware of their responsibilities.

The SgCT should be consulted if further clarification of this section is required.

Reporting and Recording

All concerns about our young people will be recorded on our *Cause for concern form*. In addition to these forms, it is recognised that as part of normal life, there may be occasions when other documents may arise that contain details relating to a case of abuse or suspected abuse. Such documents will immediately be classified as **confidential**. All documents that relate to child safeguarding issues will be kept in a secure, locked place accessible only to the Registered Manager/Head Teacher, the Director, the Head of Care and the SgCT.

This policy is available via www.serendipity-education.com website and copies are also available on the company's intranet.

Monitoring and Review

In order to ensure that it reflects current best practice, this policy will be reviewed every year by the Senior Leadership Team. If any deficiencies are identified in either the policy or the procedures then they will be remedied immediately.

The Director will assess the progress of the policy and will decide on any changes in conjunction with the appropriate staff.

Signed:



Director

September 2015